

Patent Application of Mark W. Reents for "Convertible Hard Cap" continued – Page 3

Furthermore the layered affect caused by the ability to extend and collapse or contract causes each successive portion of the cap to be smaller in dimension than the former section as seen in Fig 1. There is no embodiment or provision for a smooth outer surface and thus providing an equal interior covering dimension for each extending cap section.

The track as seen in Fig 5 for which this particular apparatus moves on the bed rails is complicated and dependent on a cable for manual movement. The tracks are not simply a guide to shuttle the apparatus to a collapsible or extended position instead the tracks are a complicated propulsion and motion system.

A further limitation for this apparatus is that the nearest section to the truck cab is fixed and unable to have the ability to freely extend and contract as the other following sections and this also does not provide the user to reverse the extension and contraction process to be from rear to front of the truck bed, should the user prefer. Also this apparatus has no provision for vehicle accessories that are common and needed on trucks such as truck bed tool boxes and roof racks. In conclusion this invention only provides manual operation and the restrictions of the apparatus described above complicate and only provide at best partial bed use unless portions are totally removed and there is no provision or embodiment for side walls to extend and contract vertically thus providing adjustable vertical height. Furthermore there are no provisions or embodiments that offer equal interior dimensions or smooth exterior surface because of the extending and contracting nature of the apparatus.

Other inventors have tried to be less complicated and provide the versatility of converting the truck bed to be open or enclosed without having to totally remove the cover from the truck bed. Inventions such as retractable soft covers are available as seen in U.S patent 5,758,921 Elizabeth R. Hal (1998) Fig 2. However soft covers are inferior to rigid material because it does not offer adequate protection, security or longevity, etc. but it does offer the ability to cover the truck bed above the height of the bed rails.

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